

It's Up to You

If you notice symptoms of a retinal tear or detachment, call your doctor right away. Quick treatment is the key to preventing vision loss from these eye problems.



This brochure is not intended as a substitute for professional eye care.

©1997, 2000, 2001 The StayWell Company,
1100 Grundy Lane, San Bruno, CA
94066-3030. www.krames.com
All rights reserved. Lithographed in Canada.

 **KRAMES**
To order, call 800-333-3032
A MediMedia USA Company

Retinal Tears and Detachment



What Are Retinal Tears and Detachment?

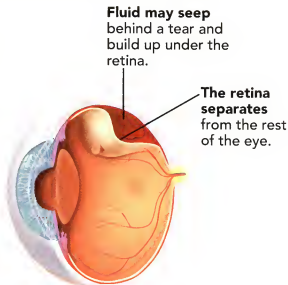
To understand these problems with the retina, you first need to know what the retina is. The retina lines the eye. It gathers light and changes it into signals that are sent to the brain and turned into visual images. Sometimes part of the retina either tears or pulls away (detaches) from the back of the eye. If it does, that part of the retina cannot gather light. Vision loss may occur. Tears or detachment may be caused by aging, an eye injury, or another eye problem.

The vitreous is a clear gel that fills the inside of the eye. It rests against the retina.

With age, the vitreous shrinks from the back of the retina.

The retina lines the eye and gathers light.

The retina may tear or get a small hole if the vitreous pulls it.



Fluid may seep behind a tear and build up under the retina.

The retina separates from the rest of the eye.

Symptoms of a Tear

If you have a tear, you may notice:

- **Floaters** (specks or threads in your vision)
- **Flashes** (lights, stars, or streaks in your vision)
- Sudden blurry vision

Symptoms of a Detachment

If you have a detachment, you may notice:

- Signs of a tear (floaters, flashes, and blurry vision)
- An area of dark vision, like a curtain or veil coming down

Preventing Vision Loss

Early treatment helps prevent vision loss from retinal tears and detachment. Get eye care promptly if you have symptoms. You are at greater risk for tears and detachment if you are very nearsighted, have had a detachment before, or have a family history of retinal problems. If you are at risk, have eye exams as often as your eye doctor suggests.

Learn the Warning Signs

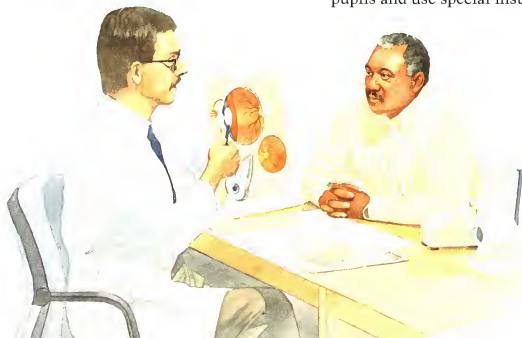
A lot of people see flashes and floaters from time to time. But sometimes these or other symptoms can be signs of a tear or detachment. Call your doctor quickly if you notice any of the following:

- The number of flashes or floaters you see suddenly increases.
- Your vision becomes blurry or dark.
- Your vision changes after a sharp blow to an eye.

Get Regular Eye Exams

Regular eye exams help catch problems before they limit your vision. During an exam, your doctor will:

- **Ask you questions.** Information about your health and your family history of eye problems help your doctor learn whether you're at risk.
- **Test your vision.**
- **Examine your eyes.** To better see your retina, your doctor may dilate your pupils and use special instruments.



What Are Retinal Tears and Detachment?

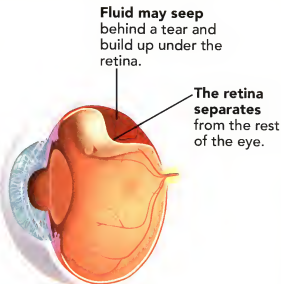
To understand these problems with the retina, you first need to know what the retina is. The retina lines the eye. It gathers light and changes it into signals that are sent to the brain and turned into visual images. Sometimes part of the retina either tears or pulls away (detaches) from the back of the eye. If it does, that part of the retina cannot gather light. Vision loss may occur. Tears or detachment may be caused by aging, an eye injury, or another eye problem.

The vitreous is a clear gel that fills the inside of the eye. It rests against the retina.

With age, the vitreous shrinks from the back of the retina.

The retina lines the eye and gathers light.

The retina may tear or get a small hole if the vitreous pulls it.



Fluid may seep behind a tear and build up under the retina.

The retina separates from the rest of the eye.

Symptoms of a Tear

If you have a tear, you may notice:

- **Floaters** (specks or threads in your vision)
- **Flashes** (lights, stars, or streaks in your vision)
- **Sudden blurry vision**

Symptoms of a Detachment

If you have a detachment, you may notice:

- **Signs of a tear** (floaters, flashes, and blurry vision)
- **An area of dark vision**, like a curtain or veil coming down